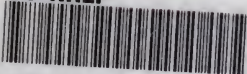


PINTO BEN

- and other stories

William S. Hart
& Mary Hart

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**PINTO BEN AND OTHER
STORIES**



He dashed an' whirled at that maddened herd,
While I fanned the old gun—but no use—

PINTO BEN

-and other stories

by
William S. Hart
and
Mary Hart

ILLUSTRATIONS

BY R. L. LAMBDIN

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*In appreciation of the great
motion picture public who
have been so kind to me and
to those who remember me in
my career on the speaking
stage this book is respectfully
dedicated.*

William S. Hart.

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A FOREWORD

BY WILLIAM S. HART

IN answer to the oft-repeated query—"Did Bill Hart get his knowledge of the West in motion pictures?" I make this brief statement of facts.

The first fifteen years of my life were spent in the Dakota Territory. The great West mothered me during the shaping of my boyhood ambitions and ideals. Therefore, I know by personal experience much of the actual life of our frontier days.

Let me relate a few unusual stories of early environment which will show why a man born of the West never forgets its history, traditions and life.

While boys of my age in the East were

A FOREWORD

playing baseball, football and their various school games, I was forced through environment to play the more primitive games of the Indians. I lived on the frontier. White settlers were few. Naturally, I had but few boy companions of my own race. A boy is a boy no matter what race or country; therefore, we played with the Indian youths.

In this way, I learned to ride Indian-style as well as with the saddle; I learned to shoot accurately with rifle or six-gun; I learned to hunt and track with the wisdom of my red friends; and I learned to play the rugged, body-building games of the native Americans, which called for the greatest endurance and best sportsmanship. In short, I was a Western boy.

For instance,—we used to sail primitive Indian ice-boats on the upper Missouri

A FOREWORD

river. This sport was the chief joy of my winter days. With our Indian boy friends we would construct the ice-boat in this fashion:

Taking a suitable number of barrel-staves, we lashed them together lengthwise with buckskin thongs. Thus, the staves were raised from the surface both in the front and rear, making a canoe effect. Then a soap box was placed in the middle of the craft. Next we placed a stout pole upright in the front end of the box. To a crosspiece on the pole we lashed a blanket. We were then all ready to go.

When the winter winds hit those rude sails, we traveled so far and so fast in one direction that it would take us all day to walk back home.

A FOREWORD

During my Dakota boyhood I not only acquired the accomplishments of the West, but I met some of the most famous characters of frontier days—white and red men. In fact, my early days of intimate relationship with the Sioux Indians enabled me to learn their tribal traits and history nearly as well as I know our own. I speak the “silent tongue”—the sign language of the Sioux which, by the way, is universally understood by all Indian tribes.

In those days the luxuries and even many of the necessities of civilization were denied us in our frontier settlements. My mother brought four children into this world, attended by Sioux squaws because a doctor could not be procured. And,

A FOREWORD

when a vicious rattler nearly ended my career at the tender age of twelve years, a squaw officiated as the doctor, the nearest physician being engaged in punching cows at a ranch some sixty miles distant. That the Sioux squaw was a good doctor is proven by the fact that I am alive today.

I relate these incidents merely to acquaint the public with the West as I knew it.

When Western plays were first tried out on the American stage, I was an actor of considerable experience. Previous to this time in theatrical history I had played many diversified roles, including those of Shakespeare.

As Cash Hawkins in "The Squaw Man," produced at Wallack's Theater,

A FOREWORD

New York City, in 1905, it was my good fortune to be able to give the American public a real Western character. My success in this character opened up a subsequent line of Western roles for me, the emphatic success of "The Squaw Man" causing the production of many Western plays. Considerable comment was caused by my repeated successes in these characters that I knew as a boy and loved so well. Many persons who were interested in my work marveled at the realism of the interpretations. Their enthusiasm persuaded me that the entire American public loved the West and its traditions when presented with truthfulness.

Unfortunately, the other sections of the United States had long been deluged with

A FOREWORD

sensational "thrillers" of the West on the melodramatic stage, in dime novels and later in the early motion pictures. Many intelligent people had formed the most weird and distorted ideas of the West from the history of frontier days to the present.

In 1914 Western pictures were, to use the language of the motion-picture producers, "a drug on the market."

Now I loved the themes of these plays. It hurt me to know that what I loved was not appreciated simply because the true West was sacrificed on the altar of sensationalism. Realizing that because of my early associations of the West, and my training as an actor combined, I was qualified to rectify many mistakes which were then being made in the production of

A FOREWORD

Western photoplays, I decided to try my luck. To give the American public the benefit of all I knew of the West from experience and training became my one ambition. In turn, I would enjoy the gratification of doing something that I had longed to do all my life. And, naturally, I hoped for increased fame and financial success. My continued success in Western roles on the stage revealed to me that what the public desired most of motion pictures of the West was consistent realism. Of this fact I was so thoroughly convinced that I was ready to sacrifice my standing on the legitimate stage, purchased by long years of toil and hard knocks, to gamble with fate.

So I declined a flattering and remuner-

A FOREWORD

ative offer from a big theatrical firm in New York City and paid my own railroad fare to California. In May, 1914, I started my work in Western pictures as a star at the salary of \$75 a week, with no other financial interest of any nature. Such was the status of Western photoplays at that time. Nearly five years have passed since that eventful time in my career. That I have devoted this lengthy period exclusively to the production of Western pictures is the best proof that the American public possesses a love for the West that will endure for all time. To best answer the query—"Did Bill Hart get his knowledge of the West in motion pictures?"—I am publishing in this little book a story in verse, "Pinto Ben," and

A FOREWORD

the story of "The Savage," which were both published in the *New York Morning Telegraph*—long before I ever dreamed of motion pictures. As my sister, Mary Hart, is a more accomplished writer than myself, there is a story from her pen, entitled, "The Last of His Blood," included. This story was first published some five years ago in "Lippincott's Magazine," making a pronounced success,—especially so among all lovers of dogs,—and I feel that I need her work to help out my own shortcomings. With the sincere hope that these little offerings will please my motion-picture friends who have been so kind to me, I remain,

Very respectfully,

W. S. H.

TO THOSE WHO LIKED "KING" IN "THE NARROW TRAIL"

For a year I have not worked in pictures. I am happy in the corral an' the boss loves to see me, as he says, "fat an' sassy."

I think "Pinto Ben" is great, but I'm just a horse an' maybe I don't know, but I'm for anything the boss does even if it ain't good. He likes me an' I like him—an' I kin lick him, too!

Hopin' this finds you all well as it leaves me at present, I am

Your friend,

BILL HART'S PINTO PONY.



PINTO BEN



PINTO BEN

By WILLIAM S. HART

Eastern folks called it a tragedy story,
An' tragedy—it rides herd on me;
Fer I know'd Ben, that cow-pony,
An' that pink-nosed Pinto know'd me.

The beef round-up cut out a thousand
head,
The craziest critters on the range,
Five years old an' beef to the hoofs,
To trail to Billings an' load on trains.

PINTO BEN

That end didn't pan hard,
We had the ponies an' the men—
Ever hear of the Chinook outfits?
That's us; Big Dry—N Bar N.

An' Ben, Ben wus boss of 'em all;
So mild an' gentle a thing;
He could beat any outlaw hellin',
Yet the pride of the wrangler's string.

Your loop might foul on a pass,
You might have brush in the way;
But Ben would always sabe
If they run on the rope all day.

PINTO BEN

Why Bill,—our boss trail foreman,
Segundo Jim, or any o' the men,
Couldn't drift in cattle quicker,
Or read a road-brand better than Ben.

Ben an' me roped fer money once'd;
The saddle-horn snapped with the cast,
But Ben weavered in, missin' every
 plunge,
Till to the saddle-tree I got fast.

Then he stood meek, his sides still
 a-heavin',
Him, apologizin' like, fer the break—
Didn't savey watches, he could only look—
With them eyes as big as a plate.

PINTO BEN

But I wus huggin' him in a minute,
We'd won out—tied in twenty-eight—
An' fer a little buckin' an' swellin' o'
 chests,—
Say son—you should seen us pullin' our
 freight.



PINTO BEN

You can make talk o' your solid colors;
Your bays, an' blacks—or, gray—
But a fourteen-hand Pinto fer mine,
An' Ben wus a King—work or play.

The range wus way back, a rim o' the sky;
The train a-belchin' blue smoke;
Ahead, a city o' bricks, stickin' high;—
Where we would be sure to go broke.

Segundo Jim a-worryin' a heap,
Me feelin' like a loosened cinch;
An' Ben just tremblin' with fear,
Wus what wus sent with the bunch.

PINTO BEN

We wus in a caboose an' had nose-paint,
An' could buck up now an' then;
But that freight car warn't no sun-up cor-
ral,
An' it sure wus hard on Ben.

I told Ben folks get used to them citiës,
But there wusn't no home-feelin' in us
pards;
Milk river seemed eight million miles
From them there Chicago stock yards.

A thousand cattle wus signed fer,
Us not knowin' where they wus to go—
Would Eastern men think less o' dollars,
If they'd watched them cattle grow?

We couldn't savey their ways,—
Didn't try to then,—by an' by,
'Long comes a clerk-feller, sayin',
"You're done—when they're in the big
pen."

When I go back to that minute,
The world seems to stand right still:
We wus to drive through a chute to the
biggest pen
An' the cattle wus commencin' to mill:



PINTO BEN

Horns an' hoofs wus beatin' the air,
As they bellowed their fear-ragin' cries;
While out o' that bedlam, an' cloud o'
dust,
Glared them frightened an' blood-shot
eyes.

Jim and me's cussed many times since,
Why didn't we tear out their throats?
They didn't know range-bred cattle,
From a herd o' mountain goats.

A locoed coyote called a man,
Trailed by a second an' third,
Commenced shoutin' an' wavin' their
arms,
Right at the back o' the herd.

PINTO BEN

Crack! went Jim's forty-five from the
bank,

An' I yanked my smoke-machine,—

The whole thousand head wus comin' like
hell,

Straight into that chute ravine!

If I could only make a talk,

Of things as happened right then,

I could tell o' the greatest thing livin':

Just a simple cow-pony, Ben.

As I touched the saddle, he was at 'em

As though just a prairie prank—

No spur a-tearin' his belly,

Or quirt a-burnin' his flank.

PINTO BEN

He dashed an' whirled at that maddened
herd,

While I fanned the old gun—but no use—
On they come crashin'—a-rippin' up earth,
Blind fury an' hell all turned loose.

When I swung his head, he know'd,
An' lengthened into that lightnin' stride,
We could only live while out in the lead,
Four lengths!—it wus sure our death ride.

God! What's that out in front?
A gate,—iron bound—rearin' high!
A screamin' neigh—an' Ben flattened—
An' I know'd he'd make it or die.

PINTO BEN

Them lean muscles tightened, an' he
cleared it clean,
The scorch of them breaths wus behind,
Pardners, I'd cash in my checks 'thout a
new deal,
If another look from Ben I could find.



When that sea o' cattle stopped comin',
They wus piled up a mountain high;
I sat in their blood, Ben's head in my lap,
A-listenin' to his last sigh.

PINTO BEN

He wus an ace, never whimpered once'd,
Though he know'd he wus goin' to fail
To go back to them Plains where men live
an' breathe,
An' that we must soon hit the back trail.

Then the greatest light I ever see'd,
Come into that Pinto's eyes;
He pulled up them poor broken laigs,
An' tried to stand,—an' died.

Reckon some o' that blood come out o' my
heart,
This heart that Ben had won,
So long, Ben—all in a day's work!
So long—you Son of a Gun.

THE SAVAGE

Savage—One of extreme, unfeeling, brutal cruelty; a barbarian.—Dictionary.







After one triumphant cry, Mahto Tatonka was swallowed up by the night.

THE SAVAGE

PART I

CAPTAIN LAWRENCE and Private Flynn did not know that when a blanket Indian rode toward them at a full gallop, his right hand extended palm outward high above his head, it was to show the Mineaska '(white men) that he was glad to see them, and that his heart was good. Why should they? They had been stationed at Fort Lincoln for only six weeks, transferred from old Fort Ethan Allen in the far East,

THE SAVAGE

to promote civilization on the frontier and subdue the treacherous Dakotas.

The Indians were dissatisfied—restless. Chief Gall at Standing Rock, outside the old warehouse on the banks of the Missouri River, had hurled defiance at the representatives of Washington who sought to abrogate the old treaty by the introduction of a new one, further depriving the Indians of their hunting grounds. The government not owing their red brothers anything except the land that the United States stands on, resented the old warrior's attitude. He declined to give up another few thousands of square miles—hence the presence of the 147th; hence, also, the presence of Captain Lawrence and Private Flynn that June evening upon

THE SAVAGE

the trackless plains, ignorant of the oncoming brave's most potent sign of peace.

So, Captain Lawrence and Private Flynn, being good workmen and true, jerked their Springfields to their shoulders and fired. There was a momentary blur of sand and dust simultaneously with the rifles' reports, and when the smoke cleared away the Indian pony was seen in full retreat. Alertly the soldiers crouched over their horses' necks, guns sighted for another shot, but before it had occurred to them to bring down the pony—and thus get the rider—he was out of range, all that



THE SAVAGE

was visible of him being one leg from knee to foot across the pony's back.

"Gee—Captain Ed!" exclaimed Flynn, "that horse turned on a space no bigger nor a silver dollar!"

"Yes! And there wasn't much Indian to shoot at, even if he hadn't gotten out of range," replied the captain. "The boys will have to pick up some of those tricks—they're immense."

"Sure, that ain't ridin', Captain Ed. Av ut is, I'm mighty small potatoes an' not many to the hill—the divil av a horse swallowed him, bad cess to 'um. Sure, it makes me feel like I couldn't ride in a freight car if the door was shut."

But in spite of Flynn's views, it was riding, and riding that those excellent horse-

THE SAVAGE

men of the 147th would never "pick up," for it was the riding of a Dakota, those sons of the free open range, the greatest horsemen that the eyes of man ever did or ever will look upon.

Two hours after dusk the pony lay dead upon the trail, the result of the wounds of the Mineaska's bullets, and the Indian no longer came toward them at full speed in friendship, but as the hunter, now running, now crawling close to the ground—but never stopping. The white men camped, ate, and slept. The Indian did



THE SAVAGE

none of these, and when he came upon them they fought, and the two white men soon lay upon the earth convulsed in the throes of seeming death. Mahto-Tatonka (Bull Bear) after one triumphant cry of victory, "Ohi, Ya, Pe," was swallowed by the darkness.

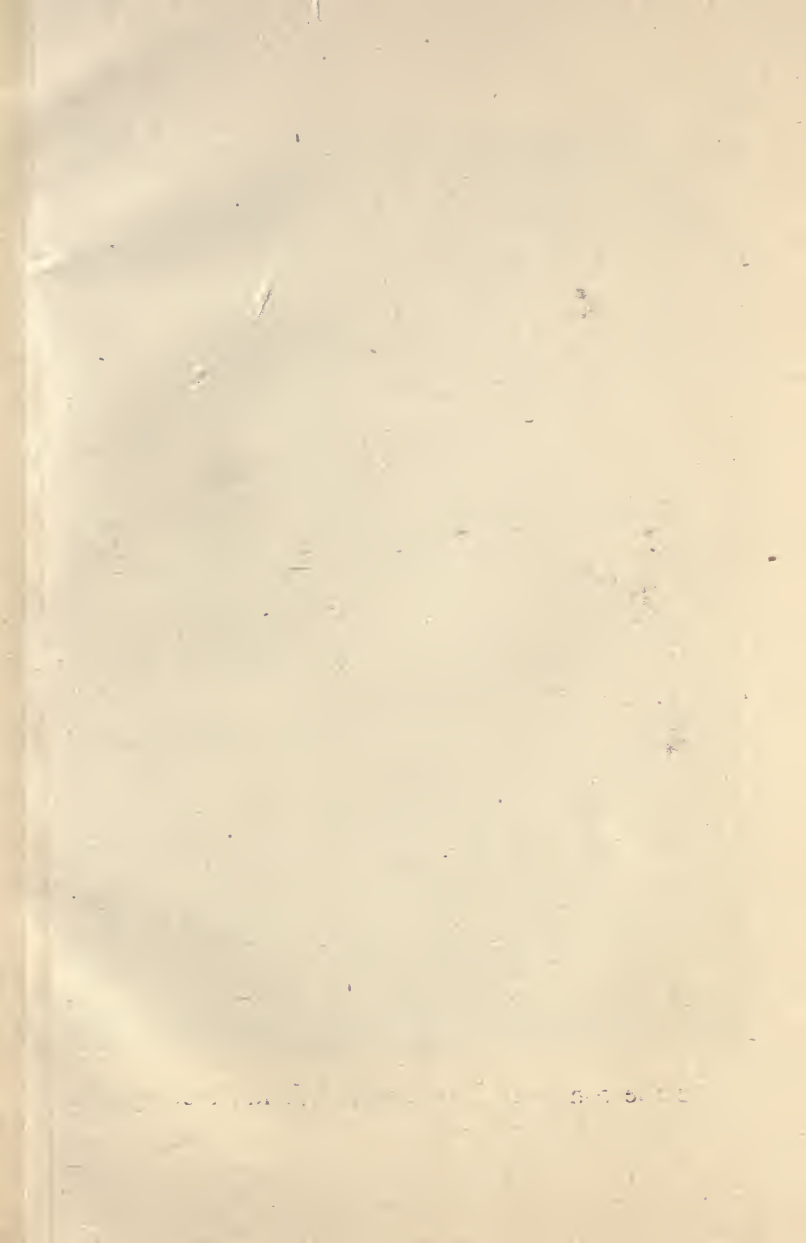
Wanda was tall, even for a Dakota. She walked with a gliding motion that was not to be matched even among her own people. Her ivory bronzed skin was of a shade that no artist could blend. Her eloquent eyes rivaled those of the black-tailed deer—they spoke volumes, when she said nothing. Her people loved her. She was Weah Washtay (the Good

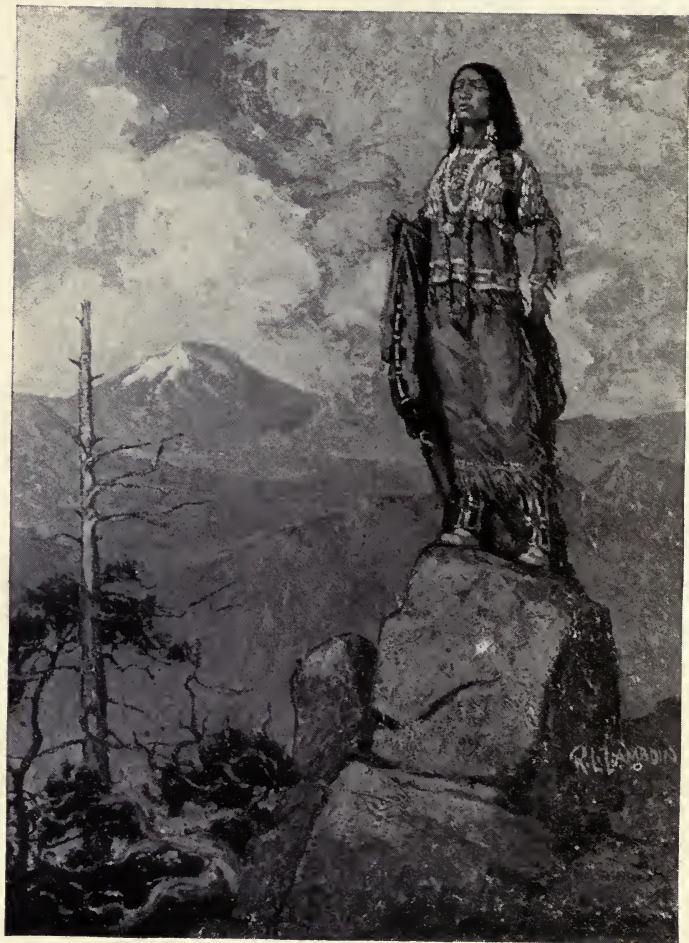
THE SAVAGE

Girl). She was five feet eight inches in her tiny moccasined feet, a straight, primitive goddess.

The Great Spirit of the Dakotas had talked to Wanda, and it told her that her medicine was good, and Wanda dreamed with the warmth and innocence of budding young womanhood of the chief that was to come out of the night and claim her for his own. Many of her people, braves, and even chiefs, had taken presents to her father and asked for Wanda—they wanted a squaw, but Wanda's heart was cold. Her chief was to come out of the night *as in a dream*. Had not the great Wakan, (Spirit of Mystery), said so?







As the sun sank in the west Wanda stood upon the rock of sorrow—

PART II

Wanda did not walk as her white sisters, of whose existence she did not know, who, belted and laced and high heeled, cover a mile and talk physical culture for a month. Wanda, in a loose buckskin gown which hung free from her shoulders, walked forty and even fifty miles. It mattered not that she was days absent from the Indian village. Indian girls do not fear the opposite sex of their own people. There are no beasts among them, and as for the beasts of the forests and prairie, Wanda carried her quiver of finely feathered arrows across her shoulders, and she could with one light-

THE SAVAGE

ning-like pull of the bow string bury an arrow to the butt of its shaft into the object of her aim.

And so Wanda came upon them, the Mineaska. And her lover, her *brave*, her *chief* came out of the night, so she nursed him and his friend. She made camp for them; she dressed their wounds; she brought wasna (food), and the pine and balsam air of the foothills of old Medicine Bow healed them and gave them strength; and around the dying glow of the camp-fire, while the rippling waters at the spring talked of love to the rocks, Wanda would look up into the eyes of her brave with the same air of simplicity that a little child would have in listening to a story told by its mother. And when the prairie wind

THE SAVAGE

with its healing breath had given full life to him, he would caress the hand that lay warm and trembling in his own—and the hand was not withdrawn. The dark olive of her face would crimson, her eyes dilate, her face nestle close to his breast—and her raven black hair, all unleashed, was blown across his face by the soft wind of the night. Then Wanda journeyed to the big fort where all the Mineaska were, and said:

“Wichasa intancan wan hanhi pecan
he napesa hekna wayan Kta, Ka sunka
wakan ko awicha un” (“Come, come with
ponies and bring my chief that came



THE SAVAGE

out of the night, and he will to marry me").

Mahto-Tatonka was captured and brought to the fort, and Captain Ed and Private Flynn swore that he tried to murder them, and even Wanda said, "We cha sha she chta" ("He is a very bad man"). For had not Mahto-Tatonka wounded almost unto the death her chief that came out of the night?

So Mahto-Tatonka, his calm, steady gaze never once removed from her who had been the idol of his people, faced the twelve leveled guns, which spoke as one, as he cried out, "A ta, nena O he ta ka!" ("my father was brave man!")—and naught but a memory was left of Mahto-Tatonka.

But that memory meant much for the fu-

THE SAVAGE

ture of Wanda. She was disowned by her people—the mighty Ogallallas of the Dakotas. Her parents moved their lodges apart and painted their faces black. Her brothers, four of the mightiest hunters, cut off their hair and stood stunned, speaking to no man. Wanda was the first of their tribe to do that which they could not realize nor understand—so heinous the crime. But Wanda, sitting at the feet of her master, her chief that came out of the night, loved on, and worshipped on.

Private Flynn fairly groaned in agony.

“Sure, Captain Ed, she’s an angel, sor,” said he. “She don’t belong to no ladies’ school, nor no album, but she’s an angel av goodness an’ mercy. A quane av her own people an’ a quane av the worreld. Sure, if it was me, bad cess to me fer bein’ so

THE SAVAGE

bold, she cast thim swate, innocent eyes at, I'd love her from the ind av her pigtailed to the bottoms av her little moccasined fate. Marry her, sor! Marry her! Sure, I'll just die if you don't."

But Captain Ed objected to being advised and laughed the laugh that was the ecstasy of Wanda's soul. "All very nice," said he, "and romantic, Flynn, but how about the little blonde girl back East that you used to carry the notes to? Young, fresh as a dewdrop, and—and white. No sun, sand and sage brush, Flynn, but a princess's bower of honeysuckle, surrounded by a shady green garden."

Still he walked and talked with Wanda,
Still he said sweet things to Wanda.
Still he put his arms around her
Waist, and called her pet,



Still he said sweet things to Wanda,
Still he put his arms around her——

THE SAVAGE

Endearing names.

And still Wanda filled his pipe
With "shongsasha" (tobacco),
And gazed with trusting eyes
Upon her master. It did not
Hurt him and she was very, very
Happy.

The shock of a death wound seems no more than the prick of a pin to a savage. Indians hide all traces of pain, and Wanda was an Indian. Wanda was a savage. Wanda did not cry out when Private Flynn, in halting, broken tones, told her. Her face turned to a mask of stone. Even the discerning eye of Flynn was fooled.

"Sure, an' I thought she'd go mad," said Flynn to his bunkie. "Divil a bit av ut. When I told her the captain had bin trans-

THE SAVAGE

ferred—omittin', av course, that he had asked to be—she jist quiet like spoke sum gibberish, 'A ko e yi ya' ('go 'way from here') says she. 'Yis,' says I, 'he's gone,' not knowin' what the divil the poor darlin' was sayin'."

As the sun sank in the west Wanda stood upon the rock of sorrow of her people, alone, save with the air of God.

"She didn't stop a second," Private Flynn sobbed. "She just looked up at the sky like she was a good Cath'lic, an' stepped off into that hole what they calls a canyon, with its sharp, jagged rocks an' boilin' river, five hundred fate below, an' whither ut was the sun settin' or me eyes gittin' full o' wather, boys, I dunno, but the mountains blushed."



. . . while Clarence Minturn is holdin' Betty in
his arms I am crouchin' low——

THE LAST OF HIS BLOOD





Well, of all dogs, it stands confess'd,
Your English bulldogs are the best;
I say it, and will set my hand to 't,
Cambden records it, and I'll stand to 't.

—*Smart.*



THE LAST OF HIS BLOOD

BY MARY HART

ALTOGETHER, it was a black night outside. The forked winter branches of the trees finely veined a sky but sparsely pierced by stars; electric lights gleamed weakly at regular intervals, throwing more into the background Carl Belnord's straggling old home with its great colonial pillars and winding drives. Only the trim modern stables far in the rear showed evidences of activity; the house itself was in complete darkness, save for a light that

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THE LAST OF HIS BLOOD

showed fitfully through the library windows.

Within, round a great open fireplace, were grouped, in relief, three men, smoking in the silence of congeniality. Carl Belnord, master of the house, broke the stillness as if in continuation of some spoken word.

“They are the most interesting, the most perfect breed of dogs in the world,” he said, “and the most misunderstood. Look at Lady Primrose here.” And from close under his great leather chair a huge, burdensome dog rose slowly at sound of her name. Her head was large—too large in proportion to her body—her muzzle black and much underhung, and both head and neck were covered with quantities of loose skin.

THE LAST OF HIS BLOOD

“Look,” continued Belnord, “at the power in that head, those muscular shoulders, that great chest, strong loin, and terrible claws, and then tell me if it means nothing but so many points in a show—so many blue ribbons. Marsden,” he went on in measured, emphatic tones, “this prodigious squatty ugliness is no more an accident than her gentleness.

“The bulldog derived his name from being useful in bull-baiting. The sport was popular through centuries, with all classes, even the nobility, magistrates, and clergy. As early as the fourth century those jaws pinned and held down a bull by the ear—the bull-baiting dog is sixteen hundred years old! Moreover, with humans he was simple, fond, inoffensive, quiet, good-tem-

THE LAST OF HIS BLOOD

pered, and harmless. He was nurtured with the breeders' and farmers' children, and loved by all; and he *knew no fear*. That one last trait was the foundation of bull-baiting. It meant merely training the dog physically to such a point as made it *possible* for him to catch and hold a bull, and he had within him the courage to do it. So matches were made and great journeys taken to witness dogs tossed forty feet in air on the horns of bulls bred fierce and powerful to make the sport interesting. Some dogs clung till their teeth broke, and many were killed, but none *quit*. The best with deadly grip held down the bull; and the progeny of these were brought to taste the blood that flowed from the mangled carcass. As a final proof of his loyalty and courage, an old dog who had gotten his

THE LAST OF HIS BLOOD

grip was often cut to pieces by his master, without loosening his hold."

"But, Belnord," interposed one of his listeners skeptically, "the modern bulldog is a caricature. He would have no chance at all—he would be quite incapable of these feats; his dwarfed body and limbs would not only prevent his ever being able to catch an infuriated bull, but would make impossible his escape."

"He might not make good his escape, because he'd never try," retorted Belnord, "and he'd never know it if he was beaten. There are, to this day, in Spain, a few gigantic replicas of our present dog (descendants of a common English ancestor) who meet and conquer in the arena a fierce unfettered bull. It was in England, to make the better sport, that the dog was

THE LAST OF HIS BLOOD

bred smaller, to show all the greater courage in conquering the bull. Then," he continued grimly, "years of practice proving that the bull had more difficulty in throwing off a short-nosed dog, that the short nose afforded a closer grip, the mastiff nose with which the bulldog began life was gradually eliminated; the breeding for points was begun, and grew to the excess that they became deformities—an insult to nature. The English bulldog has degenerated to a pitiable uselessness physically—pitiable because he still holds close in his heart the old blindness to danger—that fearless courage with all the brute creation and the gentleness with humans."

"Belnord," said the third man, a dwarfed, shadow-like creature, "I haven't heard you warm up to anything so for ten

THE LAST OF HIS BLOOD

years. You've not forsaken the world, after all. And, now that we're on the subject, how about those last year puppies of Lady's—turn out all right?"

"That's what I was leading up to, Goodrich. One of them was weakly—died; the other's a wonder—body like a lion, head like a monstrosity. Now, I wonder—I wonder if any of the old instinct slumbers in the blood. Take this same pup in his prime, given the opportunity, would that innate hatred awaken?"

"Gad, if Belnord isn't going in for bull-fights!" laughed Marsden. "But, Carl, you've got me—let's see the pup. The seven-forty shall go without me in the morning for the first time in five years."

"Marsden, you're enlisted in the cause. I'll have Wellington bring the pup in.

THE LAST OF HIS BLOOD

“Hello! Hello! . . . Yes, it’s Mr. Belnord. That you, James? . . . No, Mr. Marsden isn’t quite ready, but you can come round—and, James, tell Wellington to bring in the bull pup. . . . Yes, he’ll know. That’s all.

“And now”—standing confidently before them and accentuating his words by a swinging drive of his mighty closed fist —“for the sake of the sport, for the sake of the science, for the sake of the *dog*, I’m going to make a wager. I believe that the old grit lives, and I wager that one year from now, at the maturity of this pup, without training, he will catch and hold down an unfettered bull.”

“I get you, Carl,” said Marsden, rising excitedly.

“And I,” agreed Goodrich.

THE LAST OF HIS BLOOD

"The stakes," added Belnord forcefully, "are the pup's life: he will either win out or be killed—there is no other possible issue."

The telephone-bell in the darkness behind them interrupted with startling insistence.

"Hello! . . . Yes, Wellington. . . . That's right, it's the bull pup I want—bring him around. . . . What? I don't understand. . . . Wait, I can't hear. . . . What the devil's the matter with you, Wellington? I mean the other one—the big fellow. . . . It's impossible! . . . Why, when? . . . Wellington, I——"

The receiver dropped from his hand, he paced the room excitedly, and, without halting, continued abruptly:

"Boys, it's all off—the pup's dead—died

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a week ago of distemper;" and, as his friends closed round him in surprise: "Can't you see? It's over, that's all. Just a little hobby of mine gone wrong."

Marsden faced him, laying both hands on his shoulders.

"My car's ready, Belnord. I'm sorry—I'm——"

"Thanks, pardner," rejoined Belnord cheerfully. "Only a hobby of mine. Good-night, good-night, Goodrich. Take the south drive," he called after them. "The other's torn up."

The massive doors closed noiselessly.

"I've always thought," asseverated Phil Marsden to his friend, as the two men settled themselves in the car, "and will think, that that groom, Wellington Wilkins, has in him the makings of a d—— fine liar."





"A brute that is all brute, Lady, is loyal to none,"
said Belnord.

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Belnord, once more before the dying fire, pulled long on his calabash pipe, the dog close beside him. "A brute that is all brute, Lady," he said, stroking her, "is loyal to none. A brute instinct in a nature gentle as yours would be all the harder to kill. Gentle natures are the most tenacious and stubborn in the world—I found that out once before, eh, my Lady?—just ten years ago. Yes"—laying aside his pipe and holding her head in both his hands—"I'd wager my soul the old instinct is there, right back of the kindest brown eyes in the world."

A gaunt clock struck three gloomily and sonorously.

A falling log spread a dull glow over the room, lighting a wide stairway as Belnord ascended it.

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"Come, Lady," he called.

Lady Primrose's only movement was to raise her head and listen.

"What is it, girl?"—opening a window half way up the stairway.

A low whistle came clearly across the night, and the dog gave a throaty growl that ended in a whine.

"Why, it's Wellington"—curiously, as he closed the window. "Probably calling after James. Come, girl," he coaxed.

The old dog docilely followed, her head swung dejectedly low.

But when the house was in complete darkness, Lady, close by an open window, sat alert, ears drawn back, eyes staring with troubled wideness into the blackness outside, pinched nostrils draining in the cold air.

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Again, and still again, came the whistle.

Certainly it was Wellington; only, he was not whistling after James. But this only Lady Primrose—and one other four-footed diviner—knew. He, being the last of his blood, and rarely endowed, shall tell his own story:

That I am a dog of degree, every one grants; that I am a dog of pedigree, many suspects.

My first master I saw but twice. He was kind; but Wellington was harsh and cruel, and hid me in a dark corner of the stable, in a box full of nail-holes; and it was day when the light showed through these holes, and night when I was turned loose to run in the field, with the lights in

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the sky above showin' through, just like the nail-holes in my box. Now I yearns for more light, and, runnin' round my field, I sees a big light on a tall pole, and one night when Wellington kicks me I runs and crouches close in the bushes by this pole. And I hears the whistle that should bring me back, and the heavy foot that searches for me, and the rough voice that curses me for a fool, and I lays like one dead from fright, till the cold holds me tight, and I sleeps. . . . I sleeps till a warm hand lifts me, then I opens my eyes to the real day—day so bright I hides my head from it—and I am stuffed under a furry coat, and carried fast. When I'm took out, I glows all over.

It is a farm where I've come to. Billy

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brought me, and Betty is his sister, and Farmer Ross is his father, and John, the cop (Copper John for short), is their friend. Farmer Ross says,

“Look at the body of him!

He’s a mastiff;” and Copper



John says, “What, with that buttoned-up nose and a jaw long as a nigger’s foot? He’s a bull, or I’m a preacher;” and says, too, I must have a name, and Billy says the only thing he ever saw as ugly as me was the bust of Socrates in the High School hall, and they could call me “Socky” for short, and Copper John slaps his thigh and says, “Socky it is!”

I likes Copper John best, but he coughs frightful, and as the days get warm he lays in the hammock in the door-yard, and

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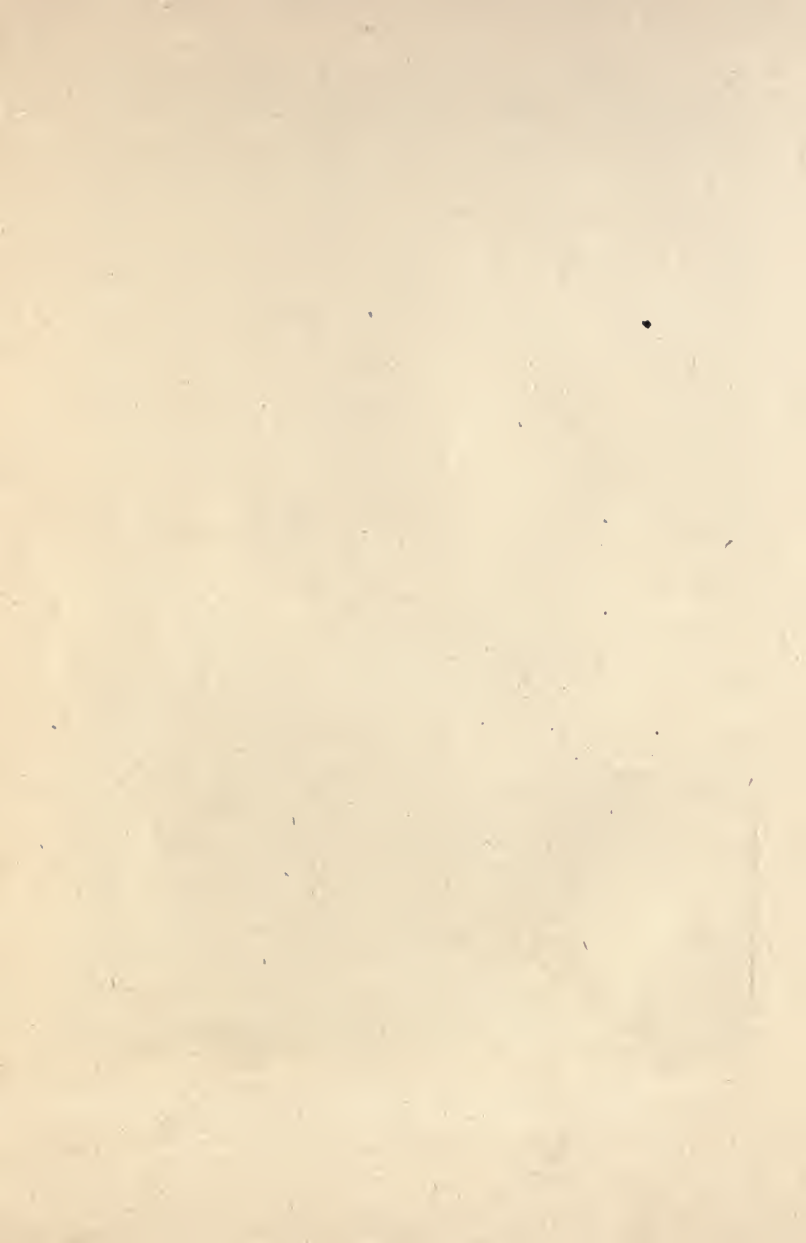
Betty brings him milk, and Copper John's eyes follow Betty everywhere.

By-and-by it's always warm, and Copper John walks through the country and takes me, and he stays long on High Hill, and smokes, and one day he tells Farmer Ross he wants to buy the Hill and build a cabin there, and to let Betty plan the cabin, and his voice trembles as he says, "Not a word till the cabin's built—her way, and with my own hands."

Then he whistles me to come with him into the stables while he gets his milk. Now, I loathe the stables (rememberin' the one I used to live in), and always runs back when Copper John tries to take me there; but this day he makes me go, and I skulks about the stalls a-puzzlin' to know



Copper John walks through the country and takes me—and stays long on High Hill, and smokes.



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why this stable turns me worse than the one where I used to live, yet huntin' and huntin' for something that draws me and draws me, and I growls low in my throat, and then—then, like a flash, I comes onto the thing I searches. It's just two burnin' coals first, and I fastens them with my eyes, and my head goes low, and my body rolls, and I crawls closer and closer till I see a monstrous horned beast, and I breathes in the steam from his nostrils, and every hair in my spine pricks me, and I knows I hates him and that I loves to hate him. . . . Then I jumps him, scarce knowin' I does it, and tries to fasten my teeth in his hide, and he plunges and roars, and some one yells, and I am tossed against the low roof and falls back into the stall

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close in the corner, and lays pantin', and I hears Copper John yell, "Socky's in the prize bull's pen!"



The bull is trampin' furious now, and Copper John and Lenny drags him out by a ring in his nose. "Funny notion for the pup to take," says Lenny; but Copper John just picks me up and strokes me gentle.

It was that same summer, when Copper John's cabin was half finished, that another man came to live at the farm. Copper John and I sees him one day when we comes down from work on High Hill. He was a tall, pale man, wearin' clothes nicer than Copper John's Sunday ones, and he was talkin' to Betty so earnest-like

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they 'don't see us come up. "Lookin' for some one?" says Copper John, sharp.

"No," says the man, slow, and showin' white teeth. "I live here—engaged board with Farmer Ross. Clarence Minturn's my name—an artist lookin' for color and types—and you—I know you: you're John Sterling of the Broadway Squad." And he holds out a hand with a ring on it that flashes like the sun, and Copper John, who has said never a word, goes into the house thoughtful-like, and then I hears him mutter "Minturn," then "Clarence," and then, "H—— of a name for a man!"

But Betty calls me back, and Clarence Minturn says there's good blood in me, only he never saw a bulldog so big, and

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I ought to be entered in the Show that fall. And Copper John, coming out, says any fool knows I'm a thoroughbred, and he'd take me down just to see them all stand aside.

And that's how it happens that, some time after, Copper John scrubs me fierce and unmerciful one day, till Betty says I'm white as an angel, and gets a big pink ribbon and ties on my collar, and kisses the ribbon, and kisses me on the nose, and Copper John puts me in the buggy and drives me to the cars, so I won't get dirty.

When we gets off the cars we goes to a place full of crowds of people, with hundreds of dogs barkin' and yelpin', and Copper John ties me in a cage and goes away. "Hello!" says a dog next to me.

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“Who are you?” “Socky from Ross Homestead,” says I, proud-like. “Who’re you?” “King Norris of Ardsleigh Kennels,” says he. “Every dog of class has met me in the ring and been beat. How did you get in?” “Careful,” I says, and the hair rose on my back. “I ain’t afraid,” he laughs. I tears at the wire with my claws till my feet bleeds, and all the dogs around takes sides, and then Copper John grabs my collar and says the Judge is waiting, and pours water on me, and hurries me to where people stands round a ring, and a man outside shoutin’, “Number two-fifteen—two-fifteen;” and it seems that is me, and we goes just inside the ring to where a thoughtful man looks at me curious over his glasses, then closer through

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his glasses, and points to a low table, and I sits there. Another dog comes alongside me, and I wags my tail and dances friendly-like, but he never notices. Then I offers the thoughtful man my paw, and Copper John says, "Socky!" so sharp I lays down and begs pardon, and Copper John says, "Up!" sharper still, and I gets up so quick my foot gets caught in the pink ribbon, and I falls off the platform, and Copper John takes off the pink ribbon, whisperin', "Socky, I'm ashamed of you," excited-like, and I hangs my head woeful as he leads me to the other side of the ring, where all the dogs stand still as China dogs, and not one wears ribbons; and I wonders if there's only one Betty in the world.

Then I sees the thoughtful man hand out

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little bits of ribbon to four men, and King Norris goes out with the one that gets the blue—when of a sudden from the other side of the rope, behind Copper John, comes a sneer and a chuckle, and a voice that turns me cold says, “So ye thought ye could put ’im over, did ye? ’Oo h’ever ’eard of a ninety-pound bulldog? And where did ye git ’im, eh? Well, h’I kin tell ye that: ’e was *stole* from Belnord Kennels a year ago, that’s where ye got ’im; but ’e won’t take no prizes, not ’im, b’cause ’e’s no thoroughbred, that’s w’y, and ’is gran’ma on ’is Pa’s side was a mongrel mastiff;” and right then Copper John’s arm slashes the air swift and strikes Wellington square in the jaw, and Wellington falls heavy against some wire cages, and

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then yells, "Hi, there! Police! H'orlicer!" and "h'orlicer" quietlike lays his hand on Copper John, and we all goes out together.

It's just an empty room that "h'orlicer" takes us to, and a few more quiet-lookin' men like "h'orlicer" stands around, and one in a cage looks stern. "Guilty of the assault, not guilty of the theft," is all Copper John says, and I reaches up high as I can on the cage and looks at him they calls "Mr. Sergeant," and he says, "Ugly-lookin' mutt." Then Copper John breaks out with, "Same thing holds good here as at the show, blast you all! Let the dog alone!" "You claim him?" says Mr. Sergeant, putting on his specs. "Claim him—h——!" says Copper John fierce-like; and

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Mr. Sergeant writes in a book, and says gruff and loud that Peter Johnson, carpenter—which Copper John gives as his name and occupation—was held to await the results of the injuries to one Wellington Wilkins, groom for Carl Belnord, and adds that Wellington Wilkins might go (which he does). Then Copper John snaps on my chain and holds it short. Mr. Sergeant says, foolish-like, “What’s this you’re givin’ us, Johnny Sterling?” And Copper John flushes, and Mr. Sergeant says, “If you wants to get the baby to bed before dark, you better hustle, Johnny;” and Copper John reaches round quick over the cage, sayin’ hoarse, “Thanks, Jimmy.” “The drinks are on me,” says Mr. Sergeant, while he grips Copper John’s hand hard.

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“You’re lookin’ fine, all beef and bellows;” and the “h’orficer” smiles kind-like at me, and I laughs back, and we goes out.

The street is empty now, and Copper John looks up and down it solemn-like, then over the houses where the sky shows. He stands so long I paws at him. Then he takes out the pink ribbon and ties it on my collar, and we goes home.

They were busy days at the Farm, because Farmer Ross went west, and Billy was new at the work, and cross with Betty, and takes a dislike to Clarence Minturn. “He ain’t square,” Billy says one afternoon when it was just cold enough to want to lie in the sun, “nor as rich as he pretends to be. Why, the boys were sayin’ in town last night that he’s agoin’ to marry for

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money—that the girl's abroad, and he's just a-puttin' in time here;" and then Billy whispers, "And he's puttin' in the time sketchin' Betty in all sorts of fool rigs," and Copper John drops the gun he's been cleaning to the ground. And Betty comes out with some clothes on her arm, and Copper John says, "Billy, will you get me some waste? There's rust in my gun-barrel;" and when Billy's gone Copper John says, "Betty, what have you there?" and Betty says, "It's a secret from Billy," and shows him a red and yellow dress that she calls "Spanish," and the red parlor tablecloth which she says is a "mantilla," and that she's going to put them on, and Clarence Minturn will paint her that afternoon on Knob Hill, and Copper John says

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Betty sees a lot of Clarence Minturn, and Betty says, "Oh, no!" and Copper John



says, "There's a pretty view from Knob Hill," and Betty says, eager, she "watches the sunsets there every afternoon, and the leaves are turned beautiful, and Mr. Minturn knows the names of every leaf, and paints every color;" and Copper John looks at her close, and says slow, "Maybe Mr. Minturn's been kind to you," and Betty clasps her hands and says, "Just noble! But Billy doesn't like him—and *you* do, don't you, Copper John?" And Billy comes back with the waste, and Betty goes in, and Copper John stands stiff-like, a-holdin' the gun tight now. "Where are you goin'?" says

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Billy. "To Knob Hill," says Copper John, and Billy, excited-like, points to the gun and says, "You wouldn't——" and Copper John says, listenin' to Betty singin' about her work, "No, Billy, I won't need to. He's goin' to act square, and it might look unfriendly to bring this to Knob Hill, so I'll just leave it with you. And remember—he's going to act fair—and square;" and I gets up and runs to go with him, but he says real sharp, "You stay here, Socky. I'm goin' on business this time." So I lays down there in the sun, with my head restin' on my paws, pointin' to Knob Hill, and waits orders. Betty sings, and the sun sinks lower and lower, and I dreams. . . . I dreams I'm at the Show, in the ring where the sawdust is

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—just King Norris and me, and we're walkin' round and round and closin' in—and—I gets him and—*bang!* goes something, and when I jumps up I knows it's the kitchen door, for Betty is comin' out with



her red and yellow dress on, with the red table-cover on her shoulders. The sun is pretty low now; Betty is late for sketchin', but in time for the sunset. As she passes me she says, "You mind the house, Socky," and runs along the path to Knob Hill. I watches Betty far as I can see, then I stretches myself and walks round the door-yard. Nothin' is stirrin'. I sniffs everywhere; no fresh prints or scents—mostly Copper John's; this heavy one the

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last. I follows it 'cross the yard, 'cross the road, and then stops, for there I comes on that other scent close by Copper John's: side by side with the one I loves most is the one I hates most, and somehow the hate is bigger than the love; which means it's bigger than me. I zigzags from side to side, a-trailin' it, and then follows it straight, straight up Knob Hill—I follows hard. I comes on them first, not knowin' they're so near: Copper John, Clarence Minturn, and Betty; and Minturn is puttin' the ring that flashes like the sun on Betty's finger, and Betty is lookin' at him as she never looked at any of us—no, not at Farmer Ross, nor Billy, nor Copper John, nor me, though we'd all die for her, and Copper John is walkin' away slow

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down the hill, and whistles for me to come; but I stays, for while Clarence Min-turn is holdin' Betty in his arms I am crouchin' low, close on the trail that brought me here; and no one sees what I sees; and my eyes burns with the watchin', for far off, a-comin' slow, is the prize bull, his neck stretchin', his tail lashin'. He's not lookin' at me, but at Betty—Betty with her red table-cover flappin' in the wind!

Copper John is whistlin' again, but I never moves, only to creep on my belly closer, closer in *his* path, and my mouth goes dry with the thirst for him, for I hates him and I loves to hate him, and by and by he'll see me, and—*now!* we are in the middle of the field! His nose goes to the

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ground, mine 'most touchin' his—his breath streamin' hot on all sides of me—and we circles round—then I hears Betty scream, and, without turnin' to look, I knows she is standin' on the stone wall callin' for help, with the red table-cover a-wavin'; and the prize bull almost takes his eyes from mine—and I has him. I pins him close, close by the ear—and I knows that, rage though he may, bellow and pitch and toss and stamp and burn me with his breath, however hard, even crush my foot in his jaw, I'll never let go, no—I'll never let go. So with me still a-clingin' he gives a mighty roar, and tears 'cross the field for Betty, me whippin' the air till my spine snaps, and I sinks my teeth deeper and deeper, his blood a-blindin' me; then

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he stumbles and crashes, and I knows I am fast between him and the stone wall where Betty stood a-wavin'. . . . I sees nothin' for the hot blood, and I hears nothin' but the rushin' in my head, but I never lets go—no, even in the dark, with the prize bull layin' so still and so heavy, I never lets go.

“Socky! Socky! . . . God! man, there's nothing to be afraid of: the bull's bled to death; the pup may be alive yet. Now pull! All together!” I feels a great weight liftin' off me, but my teeth is sunk into it, and it drags me too; then a light flashes, and I feels Copper John's hand a-goin' over my body and stop at a hurt in my leg. “Smashed to a pulp,” he says, “and bleedin' quarts.” Then thoughtful-

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like, "Minturn, the lantern. . . . Socky, this'll never be any more use to you, old man—never," and something tight ties round my leg above the hurt, and . . . I knows Copper John is cuttin' off what he says was "smashed to a pulp." I can't see the lantern any more, but I feels Copper John tryin' to lift me, but my jaws is set in the weight, and he pries and pries, and I locks them tighter . . . and everything is black . . . only, like a dream, I hears Betty's voice, sayin', "For me, Socky . . . for me—can't you hear, boy?—for me." . . . Copper John is bendin' over me, too, for something drops hot and stingin' on my face. . . . I loosens my jaws and the weight drops—I rolls sideways. . . . "Take Betty home, Minturn," Copper

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John says, his voice groanin'-like. "I'll 'tend to the rest."

Then he lifts me from where I sinks. "Not done for, Socky," he says, close in my ear, "surely not done for;" and I licks the hot drops that streams down his face. . . . And then he stumbles down the hill with me in his arms. . . . Ugh! I feels the cold water of the lake all round me, and I fights and splashes, and Copper John shouts, "There's life in you yet, boy;" and as I tries to scramble out, he lifts me and wraps me in his coat. There's something wet and cold on his hand that I tries to get at, but he lays me down and covers me, then digs in the ground. I rises and sees him lay a stone where he was diggin', then I'm wrapped tight again, and Copper John

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goes pantin' 'long the road . . . and, though I'm covered so I can't see, I knows he's not takin' me to the farm, but to his cabin what he built with his own hands, and what Betty planned.

When I wakes I'm on a blanket on the floor before the big stone fireplace, and I'm alone. I'm afraid I worries some there, and whines a bit with the loneliness and the ache in my body and the hurt in my leg, and I gets thinkin' of that thing in me that's bigger than me, and was tryin' to rise when——

“Socky, Socky,” says Copper John, shakin' a warnin' finger at me as he comes in at the door; his lantern's a-swingin', a great pile of wood in his arms. “We're going to celebrate, Socky,” he says. “We're

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elected;" and he heaps the wood high in the new fireplace, and lights it. It burns with a roar, and I sniffs the heat and stretches out while Copper John leans on the mantel, shiverin' a little; then he comes over, and, with a knowin' wink, takes a lumpy paper bag out of his pocket, and holds it up. "Guess, Socky," he says. I licks my chops and pounds the floor with my tail. "Right you are," he says, and seats himself alongside me and slices off great pieces of liver and feeds me. "Now, Socky," he says when it was all gone, and I had licked his hands—"now, Socky, we'll talk business. We've won out to-day, boy, both of us, and I've a proposition to make." . . . I listens, but he seems to have forgot me and lights his pipe, then his eyes looks

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into the fire with that far-away look that I had so often seen when Betty——
“Socky,” he says again, sudden-like, “I think you and me could face it out together——”

I agrees.

And he smokes and smokes and watches the flames, and once he coughs, and though it's long since he's coughed at all, this is just as hard as I ever heard him. He just smiles, as if it didn't hurt any more; so I licks the throb in my leg till I snuffs something familiar, and then I knows that the thing that's tied round so tight is the pink ribbon I wore at the Show





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